AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS

1-16. (canceled)

17. (currently amended) A method for processing rate controlled membranes used in implantable drug delivery devices comprising:

a) providing a membrane formed from a material selected from the group consisting of polyurethanes and polyether blocked amides copolymers;

b) allowing the membrane to relax at room temperature for about 12 hours to 7 days before being subjected to elevated temperature;

c) exposing the membrane to a predetermined temperature of from about 30 ºC to about 5 ºC below the melting temperature of the membrane polymer;

d) maintaining the membrane at the predetermined temperature for a period of time of from about 1 to 250 hours prior to incorporating the membrane into an implantable controlled drug delivery device; and

e) incorporating said membrane into ~~an~~ the implantable controlled drug delivery device.

18. (original) A method according to claim 17 wherein the predetermined temperature is from about 45 ºC to 80 ºC.

19. (original) A method according to claim 18 wherein the membrane is maintained at the predetermined temperature for a period of time of from about 1 to 75 hours.

20. (original) A method according to claim 17 wherein the membrane is cooled to ambient conditions over a period of time of about 0.1-150 hours prior to incorporating the membrane into the device.

21-27. (canceled)

28. (original) A method according to claim 17 wherein the membrane is allowed to set at ambient conditions for a period of at least about 12 hours after processing prior to exposing the membrane to said predetermined temperature.

29. (original) A method according to claim 28 wherein the membrane is allowed to set at ambient conditions for a period of at least 48 hours after processing prior to exposing the membrane to said predetermined temperature.

30. (original) A method according to claim 17 wherein the membrane comprises polyurethane.

31. (previously presented) A method according to claim 30 wherein the predetermined temperature is about 55-75 ºC and the period of time is about 12 to about 48 hours.

32. (original) A method according to claim 31 wherein the membrane is positioned in sealing relationship with an internal surface of one end of an impermeable reservoir of a fluid-imbibing drug delivery device, wherein said implantable controlled drug delivery device is fluid imbibing drug delivery device comprises an impermeable reservoir containing a piston that divides the reservoir into an active agent containing chamber and a water-swellable agent containing chamber, wherein the water-swellable agent containing chamber is provided with an outlet which accommodates said membrane.

33-34. (canceled)

35. (currently amended) A rate controlling membrane for an implantable drug delivery device, wherein the membrane comprises a polyurethane and the membrane is characterized by being subjected to an elevated temperature of about 30 ºC to about 5 ºC below the melting temperature of the membrane for a predetermined period of about 1-250 hours ~~and subsequently incorporated~~ prior to incorporation into the drug delivery device, and wherein the polyurethane is a single aliphatic polyether polyurethane~~s~~, wherein the membrane has decreased variability of water uptake from membrane to membrane.

36-47. (canceled)

48. (currently amended) A method for processing rate controlling membranes used in implantable drug delivery devices comprising:

a) providing a membrane formed from a material selected from the group consisting of polyurethanes and polyether blocked amides copolymers;

b) allowing the membrane to relax at room temperature for about 12 hours to 7 days;

c) exposing the relaxed membrane to a predetermined temperature of from about 30 ºC to about 5 ºC below the melting temperature of the membrane polymer;

d) maintaining the membrane at the predetermined temperature for a period of time of from about 1 to 250 hours prior to incorporating the membrane into an implantable controlled drug delivery device; and

e) incorporating said membrane into ~~an~~ the implantable controlled drug delivery device.

49. (canceled)

50. (previously presented) A method according to claim 17 wherein the membrane comprises polyether blocked amides copolymers.

51. (previously presented) A method according to claim 50 wherein the predetermined temperature is about 55-75 ºC and the period of time is about 12 to about 48 hours.

52. (previously presented) A method according to claim 51 wherein the membrane is positioned in sealing relationship with an internal surface of one end of an impermeable reservoir of a fluid-imbibing drug delivery device, wherein said fluid imbibing drug delivery device comprises an impermeable reservoir containing a piston that divides the reservoir into an active agent containing chamber and a water-swellable agent containing chamber, wherein the water swellable agent containing chamber is provided with an outlet which accommodates said membrane.

53-64. (canceled)